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proached to see whether a ship could not be sent to verify the discoveries of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, U. S. N. But Mr. Truman H. Newberry turned down this request on the plea that there was no naval vessel then available for this work.

America has already allowed the Belgians, the Swedes, and the French, under de Gerlache, Dr. Nordenskjöld, and Dr. Charcot, to verify and examine scientifically all the lands discovered in early days in West Antarctica by American sealers. Dr. Charcot is now at work widening his former discoveries. Will America, in the same listless, indifferent spirit, permit other nations to verify the discoveries of our greatest Antarctic explorer, Charles Wilkes? It almost seems so. The Germans, under Dr. Drygalski, verified the existence of Termination Land. The British have now proved the existence of Hudson Land. America is doing nothing. One hundred thousand dollars would probably pay the bill for charting more carefully the coast of Wilkes Land. Half the officers of the United States Navy would probably volunteer at once for an Antarctic expedition. Either the Government or a private American ought before long to send one or two steam whalers to the Antarctic to keep up our reputation as sailors and explorers.

A GEOGRAPHICAL EXCURSION IN NORTHERN ITALY AND THE ALPS.

BY

H. F. CLELAND.

The unique experiment of conducting a geographical excursion in Europe, open to students of European and American Universities, was successfully tried by Professor W. M. Davis during June and July, 1908. The *personnel* of the party changed to some extent from time to time, geographers joining it for the study of a certain region and then leaving, perhaps to rejoin the excursion later. As a whole, however, the party changed little. The following are (from memory) the universities that were represented by students or professors for a few days, at least: Algiers, Berlin, Bern, Cambridge (England), Cincinnati, Lille, Lyons, Michigan, Grenoble, North Carolina, Vienna, Williams College.

The plan of study, as stated by Professor Davis, was to "treat [the physiographic problems] in accordance with the methods of

systematic physiography." "The method preferred involves the consideration of *structure, process, and stage*, that is, each district is to be regarded as a solid mass, made up of certain geological structures (composition and altitude of rocks), standing at a certain altitude with respect to base level, and advanced by certain erosional processes to a certain stage of physiographic development. Every element of form is thus to be systematically related to the structure of which it is the surface, to the process by which it has been carved, and to the stage of development in which it stands with respect to the whole sequence of stages through which it would pass in a complete and undisturbed cycle of erosion."*

The itinerary varied little from that announced in the preliminary circular sent out earlier in the winter.

After a brief study of the physiography in the vicinity of Rome, particularly the Alban Hills, with their crater lakes, and the ancient crater which is now occupied by Lake Bracciano, together with the topography of Rome itself, of which the "Seven Hills" are the result of normal stream erosion, the party began its work near Ancona, where the stage of dissection of the foothills and the non-glacial valleys of Faenza were studied.

A week was spent in and about the Florence Basin, which is remarkable not only because of its extent and fertility, but also because of its historical interest, in an attempt to determine, if possible, whether it was due to down warping or faulting. Although no definite conclusions were reached, the majority of the party inclined to the theory that it had been formed by faulting along the eastern margin. The party also spent one day in walking across the Apennines to study the stage of the dissection of this range.

Considerable time was spent on the coast of the Mediterranean, between Pisa and Genoa, in a study of coast forms and the agencies which are modifying them and in considering the evidence of recent down warping as compared with the land to the east.

Cases of river capture on the divide between the River Po and the Mediterranean streams, and the entrenched meanders of the Po, were noted on the journey north from Genoa to the Italian Lakes.

A somewhat detailed study was made of the magnificent examples of glacial erosion and deposits, such as over-deepened valleys, hanging valleys, roches moutonnées, terminal moraines, and associated phenomena at Lake Como, Lake Maggiore, in the valley of the Ticino River and at Biasca, Ivrea, and Aosta.

* Preliminary announcement, entitled "Proposal for Geographical Field Study in Northern Italy and the Alps, June and July, 1908."

At Grenoble, France, the party was accompanied, at different times, by Professor Lory and Dr. Jacob of the University of Grenoble, and Professor de Martonne of the University of Lyons. With Grenoble as a centre, trips of from one to several days' duration were taken to the more striking or important examples of glacial and stream erosion and phenomena in that vicinity. Among the most interesting were examples of the diversion of streams from their wide pre-glacial valleys to their present deep, narrow, post-glacial gorges. In the valley leading from Le Bourg-d'Oisans to St. Christophe, landslide topography is abundant and well-developed and its close similarity to morainic topography is well shown; the most striking example being that of a lake of considerable extent formed by a barrier about 1,000 feet in height which was made by a post-glacial landslide.

A journey through the Grand Chartreuse was made to study the topography of a folded non-glaciated limestone region.

After a visit to the Cervennes of central France, where a well-developed peneplain is strongly trenched by streams, the party went to Le Puy in Auvergne, where are to be seen the unique forms which have resulted from the action of erosion upon igneous and pyroclastic rocks. Here the party disbanded, a part to go to Geneva to attend the Geographical Congress and the remainder to their homes.

The results of this extended excursion were, perhaps, no more valuable than a well-planned excursion of similar extent in our own country; but there were certain advantages, as, for example, an acquaintance with the geology and geography of a portion of another continent, and of certain regions which had been carefully worked out by eminent European geologists or geographers, as well as an acquaintance with European geographers and their methods of study.

Altogether, Professor Davis is to be congratulated upon this thoroughly successful outcome of his experiment.

THE FORTY-NINTH PARALLEL BOUNDARY LINE.

BY

G. W. LITTLEHALES.

Dr. Otto Klotz, Dominion Astronomer and Director of the Observatory at Ottawa, Can., has published, in the *Journal* of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (Dec., 1908), an interesting paper, entitled "The Forty-Ninth Parallel," in which he has stated the characteristics of the line resulting from the operations of demarca-